

Hi to all

Here are my 'unofficial' notes from the Friday, May 28th optional meeting with SDOT staff to discuss CTIP issues.

fyi

janice camp

Northgate Stakeholders
May 28, 2004; 3:00-5:00
Haller Lake Community Center
CTIP discussion meeting notes

Those present: G. Beardsley (central staff) J. Camp (MLCC), B. Cumming (Victory Heights CC), M Curry (DP&D), D. Hellene (Labor), B. Kieser (NSCC), J. Kirn (OP&M), B. Larrsen (Labor), J. Matlick (SDOT), V. Maye (Haller Lake CC), B. Maxwell (At Large), T. Mazzella (SDOT), R. Posthuma (King County), M. Rupp (Outside Mall businesses), P. Schulman (Conlin's office), M. Vincent (At Large), G. Weber (Simon).

Julie Matlick reviewed the SDOT mandate to develop a Coordinated Transportation Investment Study (CTIP) for the Northgate area. To do this study they need to develop a Scope of Work (SOW) that gives guidance to a contractor/consultant to conduct the study and that reflects the desire of the community. [NOTE: development of and getting buy-off for the SOW is considered Phase 1 of the CTIP. Phase 2 of the CTIP is the implementation of the work plan or 'study' as outline in the SOW and is estimated to take about 1 year to complete.]

The purpose of today's meeting is to:
discuss issues related to the proposed SOW;
discuss how SOW lines up with the vision for Northgate;
identify 'failure points' (failure points were defined as too much emphasis in one area);
solicit input on how best to discuss the SOW at the June 3 Stakeholders meeting.

Barbara Maxwell reviewed the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan (NACP) transportation elements. Many of the issues outlined in the NACP are similar to, if not the same as, problems being discussed currently. Also, the approaches listed in the NACP Policies are still relevant. The NACP assumed there would be density at the core with a regional transit hub, area retail, and surrounding single-family neighborhoods. The Plan recognized that the road infrastructure was nearly at capacity in the early 1990s and that traffic problems needed to be addressed by improved coordination and increased local transit, biking, and

walking. One of the goals of the Plan was to get traffic through to the freeway (by reducing the number of curb cuts, improved left turn lanes, coordinating signals, modify entrances to the mall) to decrease congestion so people could more easily get to area businesses as well as the freeway.

Jackie Kirn noted that the City did an evaluation of the Northgate area in 2000. She said there had not been much progress on the NACP since 1993. The vision of the NACP was still valid, but redevelopment needs to happen to make progress. Others disputed that no progress had been made, rather progress has been made in accomplishing some of the goals of the NACP (library/community center; transit hub); the progress just has not been as fast as some would have liked.

The conversation from this point on was wide-ranging and included the following topics:

Goals for Northgate area are in conflict. Is it to be a transit center, an urban center, a shopping center, or a living center? How to bring these conflicting needs into balance is our challenge. We need to clarify which of these goals is the priority. There was a general discussion of a 'vision for Northgate' over the next 20+ years; the group eventually decided this was a long-term discussion.

Clarify how Northgate Way congestion diverts traffic into the neighborhoods. The SOW will need to address this.

Increase road capacity in the Northgate area. It was suggested that we need new roads in the area, particularly east/west arterials and more freeway entrances. Others suggested that new roads would also soon be at capacity and an alternative solution would be to improve the through flow of existing arterials and encourage alternative (non auto) modes of transportation. There was some skepticism voiced that any changes to the freeway could be accomplished. The group was encouraged to think beyond existing barriers (such as the freeway) and consider creative solutions such as a European model (more mass transit, walking-only areas), a freeway lid between the 'south parking lot' and North Seattle Community College, or revised freeway connections.

North Seattle Community College is starting a 10-year strategic planning process. How the Northgate area evolves will be critical to this process, and the evolution of the college will have a big impact on the area. It was noted that currently 12,000 people travel to the college each day, which contributes to traffic congestion.

Request for more detail in the SOW. Some members wanted more detail or specifics in the SOW; other members felt there was enough detail. It was suggested that a small working group of those Stakeholders interested in more detail or input into the SOW be formed to work with SDOT and report back to the entire Stakeholder group.

How to present information to the full Stakeholder group. Julie and Tony suggested display boards that included relevant elements of the NACP (as example of existing information that contributes to the SOW) and timeline.

Stakeholder participation in the SOW.

- ... Help prioritize the SOW project list;

- ... Identify the priority for pedestrians, bikes, autos, and buses.

For example, should there be places or intersections where pedestrians have priority, others where buses have priority, and still others where autos have priority?

- ... Identify other 'communities' that should participate in the CTIP, such as cyclists.

- ... Help set and prioritize values.

- ... Help balance competing interests.

SDOT tasks/responsibilities:

- ... Identify desired outcomes.

- ... Identify short and long term outcomes.

- ... Identify feedback loop to the Stakeholders

- ... Identify overall plan for the entire area including a balance of all modes of transportation (auto, mass transit, bicycles, and pedestrians).

Julie said that at the June 3rd Stakeholder Group meeting SDOT would present the SOW, background information (possibly as display/presentation boards), a timeline for completion of the CTIP, and points for Stakeholder input. The June 3rd meeting would also be a good time to identify people who would be interested in participating with SDOT in a small working group. At the June 3rd meeting Stakeholders will have more discussion of the SOW with a goal of endorsing an 'advice letter' to City Council to be approved at the June 24th Stakeholder Group meeting. It was suggested that the Stakeholders need written information at least 2 days before discussions and decision-making in order to thoughtfully contribute to the discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00.